

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

This amendment is in response to the Final Office Action dated April 24, 2006. Appreciation is expressed to Examiner Michelle Crowell and her supervisor Mr. Parviz Hassanzadeh for their courtesy and helpfulness during a personal interview conducted in this matter on April 19, 2006 and the telephone interview conducted on April 20, 2006. During the course of these interviews, the amending of the claims in the manner presented by the present amendment was discussed to emphasize distinctions of the claims over the cited prior art from the Office Action. As discussed in the Interview Summary Record dated April 24, 2006, it was agreed during the April 19, 2006 personal interview that the rejection set forth in the previous Office Action had been overcome by the Amendment and the Declaration filed on February 17, 2006. However, as discussed in the April 20, 2006 telephone interview, the Examiner was studying the Yamagami reference (used in the rejection of the claims set forth in the April 27, 2006 Office Action) for rejecting the claims based on a structure in Yamagami which the Examiner regarded as equivalent to the silicon discharge ring. With regard to this, applicants undersigned attorney asked whether it would be permitted to amend the claims submitted with the February 17, 2006 Amendment to change silicon to silicon carbide. Examiner Crowell advised the undersigned attorney that she regarded forming the discharge

confining means of silicon carbide as being a different invention from forming the discharge confining means of silicon. Therefore, Examiner Crowell indicated that she could not permit the entry of such an amendment after final rejection. However, Examiner Crowell went on to indicate that she would permit entry of claims directed to a silicon confining means made of silicon carbide. Specifically, as noted in the Interview Summary Record, "the Examiner suggested filing an RCE to amend the claims to include that the "discharge confining means is made of silicon carbide." "

Accordingly, by the present amendment, each of the independent claims has now been amended to define that the discharge confining means is made of silicon carbide. This feature is completely lacking from any of the cited prior art, including the newly cited reference to Yamagami. As recognized by the Examiner during the above-noted telephone interview of April 20, 2006, as well as during the discussions with Examiner Crowell and her supervisor, Mr. Hassanzadeh during the personal interview of April 19, 2006, silicon carbide has an advantage over pure silicon in terms of being less expensive, while still providing significantly better results than using prior art structures such as silicon oxide. Accordingly, entry of the present amendment in accordance with the provisions of 37 CFR §1.114, and allowance of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

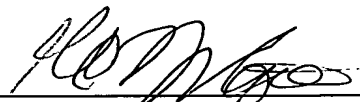
If the Examiner believes that there is a manner which can be clarified or otherwise disposed of by way of either a personal or telephone interview, she is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney at the number indicated below.

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To the extent necessary, Applicants petition for an extension of time under 37 CFR 1.136. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to the Antonelli, Terry, Stout & Kraus, LLP Deposit Account No. 01-2135 (Docket No. 520.35237CV4), and please credit any excess fees to such Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,
ANTONELLI, TERRY, STOUT & KRAUS, LLP

By 

Gregory E. Montone
Reg. No. 28,141

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1300 North Seventeenth Street, Suite 1800
Arlington, Virginia 22209
Telephone: (703) 312-6600
Facsimile: (703) 312-6666